



John Reich Journal

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JRCS

JOHN REICH COLLECTORS SOCIETY
P.O. Box 135 Harrison, OH 45030

The purpose of the John Reich Collectors Society (JRCS) is to encourage the study of numismatics, particularly United States gold and silver coins minted before the introduction of the Seated Liberty design, and to provide technical and educational information concerning such coins.

Annual dues\$20.00
 Life Membership\$500.00

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The John Reich Journal is the official publication of the Society and is distributed to all members in good standing. Members are encouraged to submit any articles encouraging the study of numismatics and / or relating to early United States gold and silver coins to the editors. Especially needed are articles containing new information about die marriages, die states of published die marriages, attribution methods, collections, collectors, etc.

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Cover Photos: Newly Discovered 1806 0130 Draped Bust Half Dollar
 and 1835 LM 12 Capped Bust Half Dime

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Official publication of the
John Reich Collectors Society

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Editor's Comments

WOW! What a way to end the year in numismatics but with the discovery of a new 1817/14 Capped Bust Half dollar. Not to mention the "discovery" of Reich's covert signature on the coins he designed. All this on top of the discovery of the new die marriages previously reported in the journal that are illustrated on the cover. I can not imagine a better year for collectors of Federal coinage. I hope you will be as excited as I am after reading this issue of the JRJ.

As many of you know this year was the first that the members of the JRCS were invited to participate in the annual convention of the Early American Coppers (EAC). The convention was held in St. Louis and was attended by numerous JRCS members. We had a blast! The officers of both clubs have decided to make this an annual dual event. We have been offered the opportunity to host our own "happening" event at this year's convention. This will entail having a number of volunteers from JRCS to make it happen. We need 6-10 members to help in the running of our happening room at the convention. The EAC annual show and convention will be held May 8-11, 2008 at the Sheraton Grand Hotel in Irving Texas. The happenings will occur on Thursday evening from 7-10 PM. We need JRCS members to step up and volunteer to help run our room, let's make this a success! The officers have decided to make the theme this year for the silver coinages- ERRORS. We feel that this will allow us to have a significant number of coins available for inspection. The JRCS happening room will be divided into two tables for the errors with striking errors on one and planchet errors on the other. We encourage collectors of the lettered edge half dollars to bring their edge errors for the planchet error table. Next year we will follow the EAC tradition of having specific die marriages from different series. If you are not planning on attending the convention will you consider sending some of your coins with a trusted friend? Anyone willing to volunteer please contact me at jrcs19@roadrunner.com and we will start a list of moderators. I can also provide more information about the convention and bourse applications for interested members.

This is the last issue of the year and annual dues are requested for the next volume. Please fill out the enclosed renewal form and return it with your \$20 check to insure receipt of the next volume of the journal. Remember that your checks should be sent to the treasurer, Steve Crain, at PO Box 1680, Windham, ME 04062. You will also find a ballot for voting the best article from volume 18. The article receiving the most votes will garner the coveted Jules Reiver Literary Award from the society for the author. You can vote for UP TO three articles from this year. The winning article will be announced in a future journal. The deadline for receiving your ballot will be February 20, 2008. The Reiver ballots should also be sent to Steve with your renewal form and check.

One of the most popular features of the **John Reich Journal** is the census provided by the members for their collecting specialties. In this issue you will find the compilation of the Bust Dollar census made by David Perkins. He has taken the time to assemble the information for our enjoyment and education. The next census will be the HALF DIMES and Steve Crain will be in charge of collecting your information. Please forward your census information directly to him at PO Box 1680, Windham, ME 04062. Please send him your

information including duplicates and die states as soon as possible so he has ample time to compile the list for the spring issue. Don't worry if you add a coin or two to your holdings, you can always send him an update!

One of my passions in the hobby is the continuing education of the collecting fraternity. I believe that we can never learn enough about the when, where, how and why of our coinages. To that end, I devour any new book on the subject. I would like to recommend obtaining a copy of Karl Moulton's new book, **Henry Voigt and Others Involved With America's Early Coinage**. It is full of wonderful information about the early Mint. A review and rebuttal on the book is available in the E-Sylum electronic newsletter of the Numismatic Bibliomania Society. You do not have to be a member of the society to receive the newsletter. Simply send an email to esylum@binhost.com to begin receiving the newsletter. Let them know where you heard about their newsletter. You will receive a weekly email filled with interesting numismatic information. I highly recommend subscribing.

I hope you enjoy this year-ending issue of the journal. Happy New Year! Please remember to send your renewal check to continue your membership and to vote for the Jules Reiver Literary Award. If you collect half dimes please forward your census to Steve for inclusion in the next issue.

**Notice: Half Dime Census Information is
Solicited for inclusion in the next issue
of the John Reich Journal.**

**Please email your complete inventory listing (including
duplicates and die states) /or any questions, to
Steve Crain at: mrhalfdime@aol.com
or hard copies to Steve at
PO Box 1680, Windham, ME 04062.**

**Remember to send Steve your dues for next year and
Reiver Ballot included with this issue.**



Plaudits, Pans and Perplexing Points



I was happy to find this new edition in my P.O. box today (7/16), but had too much to do to read it until tonight. A quick glance won't hurt, though, would it? That was true until I saw Louis Scuderi's fascinating article on the "other" bust quarter book. I have one of these paperbacks bought in 1975 or so, but have been told by serious quarter collectors that it was worthless. Scuderi points out that Breen used that term in describing the Duphorne tome, but the brilliant but flawed Walter B. wasn't shy about trashing other persons works. He was pretty good about passing off his opinions as facts, as well. Anyway, good article, good edition. Many thanks to you, Brad, and those who contributed, too.

Dick Kurtz

Letters To The Editor

Received from John Dannreuther:

Hi Bill,

Incredible job! You already have my "Reiver" vote for next year!

(Brad.....great issue.....just got back from the "hot" FUN summer show and the only "heat" was the 90+ degree Palm Beach weather! However, a small hoard of Draped Bust halves showed up and I bought 12 VF-AU 1803-1807 coins.....funny, how things like that happen! The dealer had just bought a collector hoard from another dealer - the collector, unknown to the dealer I purchased from, picked nice, problem-free examples.)

The Bryce Brown dentil study was a great companion piece in the JR Journal.

Bill, I believe you reached the only conclusion you could have as to why the experiment was discontinued.... cuds.....also, I think there was a hubbing experiment for large cent reverse dies as early as 1794, but as you noted, much individual die work was needed to "fix" each working die raised from a "completed" hub.

The early Mint did a lot of experimenting, as we are finding out, and some of it was quite innovative...such as the 153 dentils in the master die. Although the experiment failed, it shows that they were really trying to come up with new ways to improve the output.

Great work!

Best,

JD

From the Treasurer

W. David Perkins

I would like to thank Steve Herrman for his ongoing support of JRCS and for his recent donation of \$305.00 from the sale of his Spring 2007 Auction & Mail Bid Prices Realized (AMBPR) for Bust Half Dollars 1794-1839. Steve kindly donates \$2.50 for each copy sold.

I would also like to thank members of JRCS for their donations in 2007 as well as in prior years. A fair number of members send in their annual membership dues with a little extra marked for a donation. It is always appreciated and helps keeps our club's membership dues at a reasonable level.

I hope everyone had a prosperous and good year in 2007.



New Specimen of 1817/4 O-102 Half Dollar

W. David Perkins, NLG

On Monday, November 26, 2007 I received the kind of phone call that you don't want to receive when you are at the airport and heading out of town for two days.

My friend J. P. Martin, Senior Numismatist at Independent Coin Grading Company (ICG) left me a voice message to call him back. His message simply said he had something I'd probably like to see. ICG is located 5-6 miles from my home in Denver.

I returned the call from J. P. from the Denver airport. It was only a newly discovered example of the extremely rare 1817/4 O-102 Capped Bust Half Dollar. It could wait a couple of days. Ya, right....

It wasn't until lunch time on the following Wednesday that I was able to stop by ICG to view this coin. As you can imagine, it was exciting to know that I was one of the first to see and hold this new specimen of the extremely rare 1817/4 half dollar! According to my sources this is the ninth example known for the die marriage.

It turns out this specimen turned up in a 2X2 stapled cardboard holder, unattributed. It is a relatively low grade example (now graded "ICG VG-8), with a long scratch from the rim through the 1 in the date into Liberty. It has nice color and looks reasonably nice despite the low grade and scratch. I was able to view it before and after it was in the holder. I left a fingerprint on the third side, the edge, which will hopefully link me to this coin forever....

I called our Editor, Brad Karoleff and had him hold the next issue of the **John Reich Journal** (which was in the final pre-publication stages at the printer). This discovery was worth "stopping the press for!" Brad said, "Don't worry, write something and I'll somehow make it fit in the Journal." (Yes, Brad tried to buy this specimen, and was ready to run to the bank and mortgage his house along with his first born to acquire it...).

By the time this appears in print most of you will have seen a photo of this coin and read about the discovery in *Coin World* (Paul Gilkes from *Coin World* was on the phone with J.P. while I was there...). So I won't be covering this in more detail. But I did want to share my story and officially record the discovery in the Journal.

Thanks J. P.! Thanks ICG.

Not a bad day....

This specimen of 1817/4 O-102 is now in an ICG Holder marked "9th Known" and graded ICG VG-8 with "Obverse Scratch" noted on the holder.





Obverse of the newest specimen of the extremely rare 1817/4 Capped Bust Half Dollar, discovered in Colorado Springs, Colorado in November 2007.



Reverse of the 1817/4 Half Dollar, with the lower right serif of the letter I in UNITED and in AMERICA "obliterated" or missing, as noted on page 66 in the **Ultimate Guide to Attributing Bust Half Dollars** by Glenn R. Peterson, M.D.

John Reich's Hidden Initials

Bill Nyberg

After reading Michael Atkins' article in the 6/07 JRJ, "What is the Design Within the Clasp on Large Sized Capped Bust Quarters?", and Philip J. Evans' 7/97 article, "An Overlooked Detail???", I was compelled to take a closer look at the Reich designed Capped Bust Left gold half eagles, 1807-1812. The design within the clasp of the \$5 half eagles is interestingly the same basic design as the Capped Bust half dollars, though slightly smaller. The design is rotated about 45 degrees counterclockwise on the half eagles relative to the half dollars. This internal design consists of a rounded loop, with one end slightly curved and shorter, the other end straight and longer. There are carefully placed slanted "serifs" at both ends. I have not yet checked the Capped Bust dime clasp design.

The internal clasp design was placed on the working hubs, possibly with small punches, but more likely the result of planned and skillful engraving with the obvious intent to retain the same design with CBH's and \$5 half eagles. Looking at the view of the clasp on the coin, nothing is apparent, although my wife says it looks like the Mark of Zorro! She also reminded me of the ornate clasps worn by women of this era. However, if you look at the design as it would have appeared on Reich's working dies by flipping (reversing) and rotating the image until the curve of the loop is at the bottom, a "J" appears! When rotating the image further, I nearly fell out of my chair - an "R" appeared! The "R" is very clear, with the upright, loop, and downstroke in the correct positions. The "J" was first mentioned in a coin view by Phil Evans in his article, "To me, this thing looks a lot like it could be a highly individualized script capital J." I had sent images and information to the JR News for publication on 11/25/07 and 12/2/07.

It is conceivable this scenario could have played out: John Reich, an engraver with immense talent but little authoritative power, had a strong desire to sign his work, as he and his father had previously done. Engraver initials had not previously been placed on US Mint Coins. Signing work is a source of pride for great artists. How could Reich ensure being credited for his new 1807 designs as the assistant engraver? In 1807, Reich chose to secretly mark his work, with the notched 13th star (which Scot may have been unaware of, reference 1818 BD-1 \$5). He also chose to add a small clasp in the drapery of the design, where he could cleverly disguise his initials as an ornate decoration. Reich engraved a reverse image "J" and also ingeniously integrated an "R" into the same symbol! He further guarded his secret by changing the rotational alignment for the CBH and half eagle clasp design. Reich avoided the public criticism and management discipline he would have received for obvious placement of his initials on the coin. In 1815, Reich engraved his middle initial "M" in the clasp on the new capped bust quarter. Reich knew his secret would be revealed someday, in fact, he wanted this.

John Reich's first and last initials are clearly displayed in the clasp on inverse and rotated views. Was this just a random engraving coincidence, or was this intentional? I have taken several silversmithing courses as a hobby, working with a graver takes great skill and patience, especially with small details. It would be very, very difficult for me to believe that in 1807 the most talented die engraver in the United States accidentally engraved a strong resemblance to his first and last initials on both half dollars and half eagles, and accidentally engraved his middle initial in the new 1815 quarter clasp. I believe Reich's addition of the clasp into the drapery design was a brilliant plan for hidden initials, engraved with amazing precision and consistency for such a tiny design.



Inverse and Rotated images of the Clasp
on 1808 BD-3.



The Penchants & Pitfalls of Collecting & Researching Die States

Steve M. Tompkins

One of the true pleasures of collecting is in the accumulation of items for your collection. The ultimate pleasure is the pursuit of each new piece that, together as a whole, represents one step closer to completing a predetermined set or collection.

Collecting Early Federal United States coinage of any denomination is the epitome of the fanatical side in collecting. Once one is drawn in to the history, beauty and thrill of discovery these historical time capsules have to offer, the journey is just beginning as one moves from filling holes in a date set, to the pursuit of die marriages and die re-marriages.

In our perpetual quest towards completeness (or insanity if you prefer!), one is eventually driven even to the extremes of any and all things related to our subject collection whether it be counter-stamped coins; engraved coins; error coins; or literature, such as old auction catalogs or books written on the subject. One such extreme is the collecting of die states.

For years there has been much debate with many differing opinions as to what constitutes a given die state. The main gist of these debates is where a die state begins and where it ends. Where does one make the break between **Die State 1** and **Die State 2** (DS-1, DS-2) for example as well as the proverbial **A, B & C**? What should or should not be included as a separate die state? What to call those coins in transition between stated stages are also of concern. And then there is the eventual question of rarity of a certain die state.

For generations, numismatists have used the term Die “State” as a means of describing a dies deteriorating progression as it is reflected by the coins struck from these dies. “State”, however, is probably not the best word to use in describing these events. A better and more descriptive word is “Stage”.

Let us look at the definition of Die “State”. Listed in my dictionary are 27 definitions to choose from. No single definition of “state” exactly pertains to what we normally talk about as it relates to coins. The closest is the following:

***State**; noun, the condition of a person or thing, as with respect to circumstances or attributes.*

Next, is the definition of Die “Stage”. While my dictionary lists 23 different definitions for the word stage, I believe the first one listed can best be applied to the subject at hand.

***Stage**; noun, a single step or degree in a process; a particular phase, period, position, etc., in a process, development, or series.*

While both of these terms can and have been used in describing the ongoing changes and degradation of the coin dies and subsequently the coins struck from those dies, this author will campaign for the use of stage instead of state whenever possible as

it is more accurate and descriptive. The deterioration of the die is a result of the process involved in striking coins. Perhaps if we wish to be even more accurate when describing the life progression of a die as reflected by the coins, we should say that a coin is at a particular state of a die stage. It is also this authors hope that future writers and authors of reference books will embrace and perpetuate the use of stage over state.

Die states or stages are both easy to understand and yet difficult to define. As different characteristics develop during the striking of subsequent coins such as die cracks, cuds, die clashes and general die deteriorations; the die is at different stages of that deterioration. While some of these stages may last for a long time, others are fleeting and may rapidly advance to another stage. Consequently, EVERY COIN STRUCK MAY CONSTITUTE A DIFFERENT DIE STAGE OR MULTIPLE COINS STRUCK MAY SHOW THE SAME DIE STAGE!

If a die stage changes rapidly such as a die crack progressing upon each strike, or when a set of dies are repeatedly clashed, each coin struck may be unique in the progression. Would anyone like to take a stab at listing or collecting every unique coin produced?

Listings in reference books on each of the bust coinage series may or may not list all these divisions. When they are mentioned, there is usually no consistent methodology employed in describing one die stage from another or even in listing every die stage known of a given die marriage. A case in point is found in Overton's *Early Half Dollar Die Varieties 1794 - 1836*. Die stages were never the books main focus. However, many different die stages are shown and described but many significant ones were omitted. Again, there was no consistency employed throughout the book.

In the original Browning edition of *The Early Quarter Dollars of the United States 1796 - 1838*, Ard Browning did list various die stages for most all of the die marriages he described. There are large holes however, omitting some common and some not so common die stages as well as numerous intriguing die stage varieties. In the 1992 updated Browning, Walter Breen made some valiant attempts at listing even more of these and broke them down even further. He added more divisions of die stages in his notes that followed the die marriage identifying descriptions. But how Breen made the decisions as to where a particular die stage started and stopped is anyone's guess. Perhaps the problem for both Browning and Breen was their inability to see every coin extant to be able to list all the die stages for the series. On a side note, in the original edition die stages are listed as **A**, **B** & **C** where as the Breen edition lists them in Roman numerals.

In recent issues of the JRJ there have been several articles, which inherently deal with die stages in the form of cuds. While these articles have gone a long way towards showing what so called "terminal die stages" are available, there has been no general consensus as to what to call a particular stage of a given die. I for one am still a little confused as to what die stage constitutes a cud and the differing adjectives added to this word such as retained, full, etc. We all seem to know a cud when we see one but what is the true definition? There is no definition that makes sense in the dictionary as applied to coins. The authors of these articles stated that the definition of a cud was

The Penchants & Pitfalls of Collecting & Researching Die States

interchangeable with the term die break. While in some ways I can agree with this, I believe we need to at least separate the two terms “die break” and “die crack” as they are two completely different events. If their logic were used then all die breaks and die cracks would be cuds, which they most certainly are not. Also, while the collar could hold in a retained cud on the anvil die so that it wouldn’t fall out, the broken section could still either sink or be raised above the surface plane of the die.

It is this author’s contention that the definition of the stages of a cud should be listed as follows:

Retained Cud or Die Break Stage: This definition should be applied when die cracks have encompassed a defined area such as from one point on the rim to another point on the rim; an area connected by either cracks or devices; or a splitting of a die crack into two distinct cracks which then come back together again into a single crack. Applicable to all these definitions is that the encompassed section is even or level with the surface plane of the rest of the coin.

Full Cud Stage: This definition should be applied when the area encompassed in the retained stage shifts to a level above or below the surface plane of the struck coin or the area has completely fallen out of the die resulting in a blob of undefined metal where the missing piece of the die did not impart an impression and the metal was allowed to freely flow into this recess. Combining these events into one definition is a result of the difficulty in determining if a section of a die has fallen out or the raised surface has been worn away by circulation on a lower grade coin.

As to the pitfalls of determining a particular stage of a coin one has several factors to consider, some of which are listed below.

1. The difficulty in obtaining conclusive evidence on a circulated coin.

The very thing that determines a coins grade is wear. Wear of the coins surface will of course change or erase visual clues that relate to it’s die stage. For this very reason it is this author’s opinion that when doing credible research as it relates to die stages, the coins examined should be as high grade as possible and at least EF+ and above in grade.

A case in point is the recent sale of the Jules Reiver collection. This was a great opportunity to study one man’s accumulation of die stages in most of the known die marriages from our early Federal Coinage. As well as viewing all of the coins at the auction, I had the unique opportunity to purchase a large portion of Jules’s Bust Quarters (59) prior to this sale, which were not included in the auction. One of the main reasons for my purchase en block of these coins was to study their die stages and add this knowledge to what was already known. Amongst this group of coins was an 1834 B-3 in VF condition. It was noted on the envelope that it was an early die stage and had no cracks on the reverse. When I examined this coin more closely I found that rather than being an early die stage it was in fact the latest die stage I have found! Due to the wear the coin received, almost all evidence of the die cracks in the fields were worn away. Any die stage research that is done on lower grade coins should be suspect and taken with a grain of salt.

2. Relying on second hand information to determine a die stage.

Gathering second hand information versus personal observation can be detrimental. There is nothing better than having the coin in hand and examining it along with others to compare how one coin differs from another. Second hand information is always subject to another person's observational abilities. One person may overlook a particular item or actually see something that isn't really there. Damage, however minor, can be perceived as a die crack or hide the beginning or ending of one. Toning can also hide or create perceived changes. And let's not even discuss the possibility that they may have mis-attributed the die marriage! (We all know that Third Party Graders have made this mistake quite often) One almost needs to own the coin or have it in their possession to be able to do a credible die stage study. Even when you study a coin and think you have noted all the information it holds, a different person looking at it may see something else. So, two people looking at the coin and agreeing as to what is seen is preferred. Sometimes I also go back and re-examine a coin at a different time with fresh eyes and I am always amazed at the new things I discover!

3. Following the minting process in determining a die stage.

Unraveling the mint's handy work is a real challenge. One of the contributing problems of following the progression of die deterioration is lapping of the dies that were occasionally done during the striking process. As the working dies were used to produce coins, periodically they were taken out of the press to be lapped or dressed.

Lapping a die merely means grinding or re-polishing the die surface. Lapping was required to remove clash marks and smaller die cracks such as surface stress cracks, die rust or other anomalies including damage. Die clashes are reverse impressions of the opposite working die, that were impressed into one or both of the working dies when the dies were allowed to come together without a blank planchet present. This event can happen from the very first strike or at any point in the dies life cycle. Occasionally dies were lapped to remove damage or minimize an error in the die face discovered after annealing or during the striking process. Continual or overzealous lapping of a dies surface can remove additional device details in other areas such as the hair curls, eagle's feathers, arrow shafts and other low relief devices. The "single leaf" die stages that are known on several bust half die marriages are one prime example of this. It can also enhance an area or allow a better strike to appear. While the lapping process can hide or remove key elements used in tracking die progressions, the removal of this detail can sometimes help in determining a die stage progression. Details, once lapped away, will not appear on later strikes so one can determine which coin was produced first. Along with other researchers it is my opinion that the lapping process was the root cause for many of the different die combinations and die re-marriages that are encountered in all of the Bust series. As dies were removed from the press to be lapped, other dies were installed to be able to continue the striking of coins. If only one die was removed (either obverse or reverse) and another was put in its place, a new die marriage would occur. If the original die that was removed for lapping was re-installed and paired with the original opposite die, any consequent coins struck would constitute a re-marriage of the original dies.



Fig. 1 1807 B-1 EDS

actually struck showing these light cracks and how often this happened in our early mint may never be known as very little wear would be required to erase the evidence of them.

Following along with our Bust Quarter theme are two examples of overzealous lapping as illustrated with the coins in figures 2 & 3 and 4 & 5.

In this example (*fig. 2*), the die received some damage due to an unknown foreign object in the left side of the shield. (*note the raised die line from the lower leaf to the right foot of R in America*)



Fig. 2 1806 B-4



Fig. 3 1806 B-3

Photo courtesy of Heritage Galleries

while still leaving evidence of the deeper damage in the shield (*fig. 3*).

A good example of how lapping can erase or retard a particular die stage is shown in (*fig. 1*). Most collectors would think that this was a very late die stage of this coin. In fact this is a very early die stage of the 1807 B-1 Bust Quarter. On this coin we see a tremendous amount of apparent die cracks all over the obverse that have never really been fully documented. (*There was a short description by David Lange in the JRJ Vol. 12/3 but only a line diagram was illustrated*)

These are not true die cracks but surface stress cracks, which were completely lapped away and never returned throughout the rest of the life of this die. How many coins were

After the obverse die of the 1806 B-4 marriage was retired due to severe die breaks, the reverse die was lapped in an effort to remove as much of the damage in the shield as possible before it was re-married with the B-3 obverse. Consequently, this heavy lapping ground away the raised die line or graver mark



Fig. 4 1806 B-9 EDS

As the die was lapped repeatedly to remove the die clashes and retard the die cracks that occurred, the coiner was a little overzealous and lapped away the curl details in the two previously mentioned locations as well as the fore curl at the front of the hair above the forehead (see *fig. 5*). This changed the look of the die diagnostics so much that Browning felt that it deserved a separate listing and it is one of only two examples of a die stage that has a separate plate. Browning stated that the changes are so severe that one might mistake it for a different die.



Fig. 5 1806 B-9 LDS

The examples listed above while only caused by lapping of the working dies, should constitute a major enough change in the appearance of coins struck from them to warrant listings as a separate die stage. But shouldn't the reason for the lapping also be a different die stage? When the dies clashed and left their reverse impressions did it not create a distinct and different stage? In a perfect world it probably should. The reason this sometimes can't be listed as a separate stage might be that as the dies were clashed, then lapped to remove the clash, then clashed again, there may be no possible way to track or ascertain this progression. At the very least, when describing a particular die stage, the quantity and presence of die clashes must be noted. Even if one believes that he has a complete understanding of what events took place and in what order they took place, it is probable that more has occurred than what can readily be seen. As in the first example shown, if a die crack occurs on a die that also has a clash and then is lapped to remove the clash, the die crack may appear to a lesser degree or be removed entirely.

4. The examination of a small or limited amount of coins.

As with any research, the more examples examined the more accurate the end results. One coin exhibiting a particular event or stage is not necessarily conclusive proof of a die stage. Another example showing the same event has much more validity. If a stage has advanced rapidly then only one example may have been produced and really... should this constitute a separate listing? How could anyone hope to collect such a list of these unique die stages? If the event occurs across a length of time shown on multiple coins then it should warrant a separate die stage listing of it's own.

5. Die stage rarity is inconclusive.

Many collectors and researchers work very hard to determine rarity ratings for die marriages, die re-marriages and die stages. Along with auction appearances, coins for sale on fixed price lists and coins examined at coin shows, individual collectors inventories are also added together to produce a combined total of known pieces. While this is a great start towards a definitive answer as to rarity it should still be suspect as many collectors don't share information and prefer to remain anonymous. Coupled with this are the many examples that are owned by collectors who don't examine them as to die stage, as that is not their collecting focus. These examples reside in date sets, type sets and older collections that have been off the market for many years and may have never been in a public auction to be tracked. Collectors also tend to hoard interesting die stages of which duplicate examples may not be counted. Again, don't take any stated rarity for granted for as soon as a new die stage is discovered and revealed to the collecting community other collectors will begin looking for them. With the increased interest more examples are bound to appear. Only after many years of intense pursuit by multiple collectors can one begin to understand the true rarity of a particular item.

At this point we still have not reached any final decisions as to the labeling of the die stages in reference books and in our own collections. Let's look at an overview of the possible ways to do this.

For our example let us use the Bust Half series as this is a widely collected series of both die marriages and die stages.

Example: 1812 O-110

Currently there are three distinct die stages for this marriage listed in Overton.

#1

- 1812 O-110** (considered the earliest or "prime" die stage)
- 1812 O-110A** (a later stage which encompasses a reverse die crack and worn dies)
- 1812 O-110B** (the latest observed stage showing heavy lapping which has removed leaf details creating a "single leaf")

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An alternate way to express this same progression

#2

1812 O-110 DS-1 (Die Stage -1) (considered the earliest or “prime” die stage)

1812 O-110 DS-2 (Die Stage -2) (a later stage which encompasses a reverse die crack and worn dies)

1812 O-110 DS-3 (Die Stage -3) (the latest observed stage showing heavy lapping which has removed leaf details creating a “single leaf”)

Another alternate way to express the same progression

#3

1812 O-110 EDS (Early Die Stage) (considered the earliest or “prime” die stage)

1812 O-110 MDS (Mid Die Stage) (a later stage which encompasses a reverse die crack and worn dies)

1812 O-110 LDS (Late Die Stage) (the latest observed stage showing heavy lapping which has removed leaf details creating a “single leaf”)

As a fourth example, one other possible way to describe a die progression is how they were listed in the latest reference published for the silver bust coinage, the Half Dime series, in *Federal Half Dimes 1792 - 1837* by Russ Logan and John McCloskey.

#4

The authors chose not to break the die stages down into any defined separate numbered or lettered listings. They combined these stages into one paragraph, listing all deteriorations seen and in the order that they believed they occurred. While this eliminates any need to determine which stage a coin might be, it also eliminates a defined subset of coins one can collect within a given die marriage. As we all know we are “nuts” about these coins and as collectors any additional way to collect is preferred!

In the four examples listed above, only the third one solves the problem of what to call the discovery of a coin showing attributes later than one of the stated stages but earlier than the next. If a coin is not the EDS or the LDS then it should fall into the MDS category. But still, what if a truly significant change in the die is discovered which collectors would want to acquire? For this scenario the preferred method would be the second one as stages can be added indefinitely and the die stage numbers (DS-1 etc.) can be numerically shifted as new examples are discovered and defined. As shown in the first example, using letter designations would cover most listings of die stages as well, but shouldn't the first stage known or the “prime” die stage be listed as the “A” model?

Every die has a “prime” stage but this stage may encompass some sort of die degradation, many of which began in the die preparation process. During the punching of devices into the die and heating and annealing of the dies, stress points and weak

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areas may develop. These points may already show up as a die crack before a single coin is struck or may develop a crack as the first coin is produced. Clash marks could also be produced with the very first strike if a planchet fails to be fed into the striking chamber. Along with this reason the first stage listed should always be listed as either “A” or “1”.

Further, stages are progressing at different rates for the obverse and the reverse. While a die crack may begin on one side of the coin nothing may happen on the other or a die crack may complete from one point to another. Separating each side and listing what occurs will not necessarily show how the stages of each die overlap. When cataloging or listing each side of the coins stage, reference to both would be preferred.

The following fictitious example is a proposed scenario to describe these progressions.

DS-1: *Obverse perfect; Reverse perfect.*

As an event occurs a new die stage is listed such as:

DS-2: *Obverse die crack from rim to star 1; Reverse perfect.*

Listing of a new die stage should commence when any new event occurs even if a previous stage has not completed such as:

DS-3: *Obverse die crack from rim to star 1; Reverse die crack across tops of United.*

As the progression continues the next stage to list could be at the completion of an event such as:

DS-4: *Obverse die crack from rim to star 1, across field to drapery; Reverse die crack across tops of United.*

A final or latest stage seen might be listed as such:

DS-5: *Obverse die crack from rim to star 1, across field to drapery; Reverse die crack across tops of United to first S in States; both sides show clashing.*

So, in listing a coin according to die stage one must list the year, die marriage and the die stage. The following would be an example for a Bust Quarter. **1818 B-4 DS-3**

Conclusions:

Along with the pitfalls listed in this article there are several proposals - from the proper use of terminology when describing die stages to different ways of categorizing them. It is my hope that some note of reason has been included with these suggestions and from now and into the future they will be embraced. Unfortunately, until such time as all writers, collectors and the numismatic community as a whole can agree on a method and proper terminology for die stages, collectors are on their own in determining what to call specimens they discover and which stages to pursue or collect. I hope that the ideas listed here will provoke some new thoughts on this subject, be they good or bad, and I would be interested in hearing those thoughts.



2007 Early Silver Dollar Census

W. David Perkins, NLG

This survey marks the fifth early dollar census published since the first issue of the *John Reich Journal* was published in January 1986.

The first early dollar census was published in the October 1990 issue of the *Journal*. The most recent early dollar census was published in the *John Reich Journal*, Volume 16 / Issue 3, June 2005.

[Back issues with these previous early dollar censuses (and other articles) may still be available. For availability and information regarding back issues, please contact Brad Karoleff, Editor, John Reich Journal at the P.O. Box listed inside the front cover of this issue.]

[Editors Note: You can check availability on our website - www.jrcs.org]

Grading for the 2007 Survey

For the early dollar census, JRCS has always used the numerical grades as sent in by the member participants. *Some coins included in the census are “raw” and some coins are “slabbed.” Early dollars with “slab grades” include examples from at least six different grading services. The grades as provided by the owners are the grades that are included for the JRCS Census.*

Rarity Ratings

The rarity ratings in this census are mine. I made a few changes to the ratings for the 2005 survey based on my research and on feedback and suggestions from other early dollar collectors. I have not changed any ratings for this census.

As always, I am interested in our members' feedback on rarity ratings.

Analysis and Comments

More than fifteen members sent in their censuses. The top 15 collections submitted for the 2007 early dollar survey are included here, with the other collections being included in the totals for each die marriage (PCS), the average grade (AVG) and the highest grade listed (MAX).

For 2007 we have some new collections and we have “lost” a few. Most notably, Bill Luebke sold his extensive collection with 108 different die marriages via public auction in January 2007. The sale of Bill's collection helped others “fill a few holes” and allowed a few collectors to “pick up an R-7 and R-8 die marriage or two.”

As the cost to complete a set of all the known die marriages increases over time, I predict that we will see more and more specialized collections of early dollars, something between a “Date and Major Type Set” and a set focused on all known die marriages. This might include a collection of all of the known die marriages for one year to a very narrow focus such as die

states of a particular marriage, for example 1797 B-1 or 1798 B-8. Or possibly a set with all known die marriages of a die used in striking a larger number of marriages, for example the reverse die first used in striking 1795 B-14 and also used in striking die marriages for 1796, 1797 and 1798! This would be achievable and would make a wonderful die study / display. For a tougher challenge, imagine collecting all marriages struck with the obverse die which was first used to strike 1798 B-27 and was used to strike a total of seven known die marriages. This series would entail one tough R-8 (1798 B-33) and would be an extreme challenge to acquire in a high grade, like About Uncirculated or higher! Just try to find a nice high-grade example 1798 B-26 or B-29....

As you look through the 2007 census, you might note one collection (at this time) only focuses on the Draped Bust dollars 1795-1803. This collection is fairly complete and has a relatively high overall average grade. My current focus is primarily on the Heraldic Eagle “Dollars of 1798, much like collecting the “Large Cents of 1794.” One collection only had one die marriage, a 1794 Dollar, which traces its provenance to an early Chapman sale!

As in the 2005 survey, I have chosen not to include duplicates in the total “number of specimens.” Most of the duplicates were of die marriages with rarity ratings from R-1 to R-5. Including duplicates tends to lower both the average grade (for die marriages with duplicates) and to lower the overall grade of the *primary* collection containing these duplicates. It is important to include them for purposes of determining rarity ratings, and this was done.

For the first time in history we have a complete collection of all 118 known business strike die marriages. Congratulations to Warren Miller for this significant and historical accomplishment!

Although they all came close in their time, Milferd H. Bolender did not accomplish this feat; the Ostheimers did not, nor did Jules Reiver (who was only four die marriages short of achieving this). For over 60 years or more the key rarities (R-8s and tough R-7s) have been tightly held in *more than one* collection, making this task virtually impossible.

For example, the Eliasberg collection held the only known specimen of the 1795 B-18 Dollar until April 1997. This was one of the keys that kept Bolender and the Ostheimers from completing a set of all the known die marriages (at the time). This coin had not been offered publicly since the 1913 Chapman Earle sale, Eliasberg having acquired it privately from the Clapp Estate in 1942.

Frank Stirling owned the unique 1795 B-19 since 1951, when it was discovered. This was the last “hole” Warren Miller needed to fill to complete the set, following the Reiver sale where he picked up two of the three die marriages he was missing in the last census. In early 2006 Miller acquired the Stirling Specimen of 1795 B-19 and became the first collector ever to complete a set of all known early dollar die marriages. [*For more details on the 1795 B-19 and the Miller Collection being complete, see Coin World, May 22, 2006, Page 1*].

For those who did not see the *Coin World* article, this 1795 B-19 also has a silver plug center! It was a thrill to discover this silver plug center when the Stirling family first showed me the coin in 2005.

For the 2007 Census, we have three collections with over 100 die marriages. We also have two collections with between 80 and 90 marriages and another two with a count in the 70s. We have two collections with an average grade of AU-50 or higher, with member #1242's collection having the highest average grade at "AU-51." Two other collections are close to this level, with average grades of 49 and 48 respectively.

The census includes only two examples of 1795 B-8, a tough R-7 marriage with only one decent and problem free example known to me. There are five specimens each of 1795 B-10 and B-11. Only one of the three known 1795 B-16 Dollars is listed in this census. All three of the known 1795 B-20 Dollars are *present* in the census for the first time ever.

For 1796, we once again have two examples of R-8 1796 B-3 in the survey. These are the same two examples included in the last census, however one of the specimens has *changed hands* in the last year or so. As I have noted before, numerous 1796 B-3 Dollars have *appeared* and been cataloged for sale at auction over the years. Very few were plated. How many were *in actuality* the 1796 B-3 die marriage? How many exist today? Are there more out there? For now, this remains an R-8 in my book.

We have two of the three known examples of 1796 B-6, with the neat vertical reverse die break.

The "Dollars of 1798" are a personal favorite of mine. This year's census has only one complete collection, that of Warren Miller. The next most complete collection is missing the tough R-7 1798 B-18 and the R-8 B-33, with only three specimens known (and the neat reverse die break!). One other collection has an example of the extremely rare 1798 B-18 but is missing the relatively common B-13 along with the 1798 B-33 (this collector owned a B-13 at one time, but sold it hoping to upgrade the die marriage at later date). Three of the five known examples of 1798 B-18 are included in this census, with the finest known example grading VF-30. All of the other examples known exist in grades ranging from AG to VG. All three known examples of 1798 B-33 are included in this survey.

Amazingly, this census has nine examples of the high R-6 and very popular 1798 B-5 Dollar! And it includes nine specimens of the tough "Knob Nine" 1798 B-32 (including the two finest known specimens).

Has anyone seen or found an example of 1798 B-5 *without* the reverse die break? The only specimen I've been able to trace was Lot 46 in the 1974 Stack's W. Earl Spies sale. This early die state example has to be out there somewhere!

For 1799 we have five collections complete with all die marriages known. Calculations on the 1799 Dollars (only) show that the Miller collection averages an overall grade of AU-55, with #1242 and #1153 averaging "AU-54."

On a side note, what is the toughest 1799 die marriage to obtain in *true* About Uncirculated condition? In my opinion and experience, it's 1799 B-22.

There are three collections that are complete with all known die marriages for 1799 to 1803, with two other collections close to this accomplishment.

Enjoy studying the 2007 Early Dollar Census!

Year	B#	BB#	R#	310	1242	951	1153	101	429	018	1054	897	165	1072	222	1213	013	716	PCS	AVG	MAX
1794	1	1	4	40	58					12									4	35	58
1795	1	21	2	40	58	25		25	12	15	20			3					8	25	58
	2	20	3	40	53	15					10	20			40	45			7	32	53
	3	11	5	30	20	20			8		10			20					6	18	30
	4	14	3	45	55	15			4			35							5	31	55
	5	27	1	55	58	20		30		25	12	35	30	6	35				11	29	58
	6	25	3	45	53	30		35				25	45			30			7	38	53
	7	10	3	40	58	15		30			8			15					6	28	58
	6	15	7	15													40		2	28	40
	9	13	4	45	55	15		35		45									5	39	55
	10	22	7	40	30							15		40			30		5	31	40
	11	12	7	40	35					40		40					35		5	38	40
	12	26	5	35	25	25			15	15	30						25		7	24	35
	13	24	5	50	40	35				40			30		15			30	7	34	50
	14	51	2	50	50	30	55	40	40	50	12								8	42	58
	15	52	2	60	58	20	25		25	55	15			3	35				9	33	60
	10	23	8	40															1	40	40
	18	17	8	58															1	58	58
	10	19	8	6															1	6	6
	20	16	8	10	35						15								3	20	35
	21	28	8	10															1	10	10
	22	29	8	20															1	20	20
1796	1	66	4	45	58	12	50	40	20	40	25			20					10	36	58
	2	63	4	53	35	12	45		15		35								6	33	53
	3	62	8	53	25														2	39	53
	4	61	3	50	55	30		35	35	40	25			20	20	45			11	38	55
	5	65	4	50	55	20	40	35	45	45	35	40	15	40					11	38	55
	6	64	8	35										20					2	28	35
1797	2	73	3	63	50	35	50	40		40	25		50		25	30			11	39	63
	2	72	4	50	45	30	45		15	40		20							7	35	50
	3	71	2	61	50	35	35		30	45	12				45				8	40	61
1798	1	82	3	60	50	12	58	30		40	17	45							8	39	60
	2	81	3	63	55	20	45	40	12	50					35				8	40	63
	3	94	5	63	50	30	50	30	12	40		40		45					9	41	63
	4	92	5	35	45	35	40	40	45	40	45		55						9	42	55
	5	93	6	53	45	12	25		55	20			53	40			40		9	38	55
	6	96	3	55	55	40	45	45		50									6	48	55
	7	95	5	45	40	12	25	30	10	15		45	45	20					10	29	45

Year	B#	BB#	R#	310	1242	951	1153	101	429	018	1054	897	165	1072	222	1213	013	716	PCS	AVG	MAX
1798	8	125	2	55	55	25	45	55	45	45			58	35	25				10	44	58
	9	121	5	55	58	30	55	45	40	40	12	55	45						10	44	58
	10	109	5	62	45	15	53	20	15		30	50	50						9	38	62
	11	111	3	55	40	20	53	15	25	35			45				20		9	34	55
	12	120	4	45	45	20	35	45	8	12	35	50		15					10	31	50
	13	108	3	58	55	35		45	25	55	40								7	45	58
	14	122	3	55	55	25	53	53	30	50	35		45	40					10	44	55
	15	112	3	61	50	30	55	40	45		35	45	50						9	46	61
	16	110	6	55	50	35	40		25	20		45	30	35			55		10	39	55
	17	101	5	53	53	20	25		40	20		53	55						8	40	55
	18	103	7	6			4						30						3	13	30
	19	106	5	50	53	20	55	35	30	40		50	58						9	43	58
	20	102	5	55	45	45	50	30	15		20	55	55		45				10	42	55
	21	107	5	55	58	35	45	30	35	50		50		10					9	41	58
	22	104	4	50	53	40	55	20											5	44	55
	23	105	3	55	58	40	58	40	35		45		40		25				9	44	58
	24	124	2	55	55	35	53	55	40	20		45	55						10	47	55
	25	123	4	50	55	20	61	30	45		40		55						8	45	61
	26	114	5	53	55	12	45		35	35	35	40	61	40					10	41	61
	27	113	2	55	55	25	50	55	20	40									7	43	55
	28	118	3	55	50	35	50	45		50		45	55						9	46	55
	29	119	4	50	35	25	50	35	40	8		45	45		15				10	35	50
	30	116	5	58	50	20	45	35	20	50		58	58			30			10	42	58
	31	115	5	58	53	30	50	35	45	57	35	45	45						10	45	58
	32	91	7	30	61	15	25			40	3	40	55	35					9	34	61
	33	117	8	50									53						3	46	53
1799	1	142	4	50	62	20	53	25	15				50						7	39	62
	2	143	4	55	55	12	58	45	25			58			15	40			9	40	58
	3	141	3	61	62	30	55	45	25	50									7	47	62
	4	153	4	55	53	25	58	35	20			50							7	42	58
	5	157	2	62	58	20	58	53	30	50	45								8	47	62
	6	162	4	45	25	20	50	30		55	40								7	38	55
	7	156	4	58	53	25	55	25	35		25	50	45						9	41	58
	8	165	3	62	53	20	58	35	35	50	20	53							9	43	62
	9	166	1	58	58	12	61	35	30	35	25						20		9	37	61
	10	163	2	61	55	30	55	30	45		35		58	15					9	43	61
	11	161	3	45	55	45	55	35	45	35	30			3	45				10	39	55
	12	160	3	62	58	12	55	30		50	15				30				8	39	62

Year	B#	BB#	R#	310	1242	951	1153	101	429	018	1054	897	165	1072	222	1213	013	716	PCS	AVG	MAX
1799	13	151	5	58	45	30	45	20	25	50	30								8	38	58
	14	167	3	58	58	25	53	15		53	20								7	40	58
	15	152	3	45	50	30	55	20					53	15					7	38	55
	16	158	2	64	50	25	58	35	45	53	20				50				9	45	64
	17	164	2	50	50	15	55	40		53	20	50			12				9	38	55
	18	154	5	58	55	35	55	45	45	45	20	40							9	44	58
	10	155	5	55	55	15	53	40	30	50	35	45			40				10	42	55
	21	169	3	50	50	30	45	30		45	45								7	43	58
	12	168	5	45	50	40	50	30	45	50	30	40		15	25				11	38	58
	23	159	4	61	58	55	55	30	40	45					25		40		9	45	61
1800	1	181	5	53	53	15	40	25	30	40	35	35	55						10	38	55
	2	182	6	55	45	25	45	25	25			40							7	37	55
	3	183	5	45	30	8	53		25										5	32	53
	4	186	4	61	55	25	50	8	30										6	38	61
	5	189	5	50	45	40	50	20	35		20		45						8	40	58
	8	188	4	35	53	25		45	45	50	40	45				50			9	45	53
	10	190	3	55	58	40	50	53	40		45				20				8	46	58
	11	191	5	53	50	15	45	35	30	20				15					8	33	53
	12	184	3	55	55	50	50	45		50	40			30					8	47	55
	13	193	4	53	58	30	45	53		53	40	55	35		50				10	47	58
	14	194	3	55	55	35	50	55	15	53	20								9	40	55
	15	195	4	50	55	15	45	30	20	30	12	50							9	36	55
	10	187	2	50	63	20	45	45	30	53					3		20		9	37	63
	17	196	1	50	45	35			45	55	30	45			50				8	45	58
	10	192	2	55	61	45		30	30	50	10	50			20	25			10	38	61
	20	185	6	53	45	8	30				45	40		8					7	36	53
1801	1	211	3	50	58	35	55	45	35	50					25	40		20	10	41	
	2	212	3	58	50	20	50	20	45	35	45	50						20	10	42	58
	3	213	3	50	55	15	55	50		50				20				15	8	39	55
	4	214	4	55	45	30	55	35			12							25	7	36	55
	5	301	7																		
1802	1	231	4	55	45	12	50	25			20	45							7	36	55
	2	233	4	50	50	20	40	15	15		35	40							8	33	50
	3	234	3	50	61	30	50	15		55	45								7	44	61
	4	232	4	58	55	12	50	25	30	40	35					40			9	38	50
	5	242	5	55	58	30	45	40	45			35							7	47	58
	6	241	1	58	53	35	58	35	40	50					25				8	44	58
	8	302	7																		

Year	B#	BB#	R#	310	1242	951	1153	101	429	018	1054	897	165	1072	222	1213	013	716	PCS	AVG	MAX
1802	9	235	5	58	53	30		15	20	40	12	45		25					9	33	58
1803	1	251	4	58	50	25	40	45	50			40							7	44	58
	3	256	6	50	35	25	45	40	30			40					50		8	39	50
	4	254	3	58	55	20	50	30			15								6	38	58
	5	252	3	61	53	35	55	50	20					20					7	42	61
	6	255	2	50	55	40	55	55	30	40	35	45			35	45			11	44	55
	7	303	7																		
Die Marriages				118	109	104	89	87	78	74	65	51	36	30	28	11	11	5	121 Known Including the 3 proofs.		
Average Grade				50	51	26	49	35	30	42	27	44	48	23	29	38	34	22			

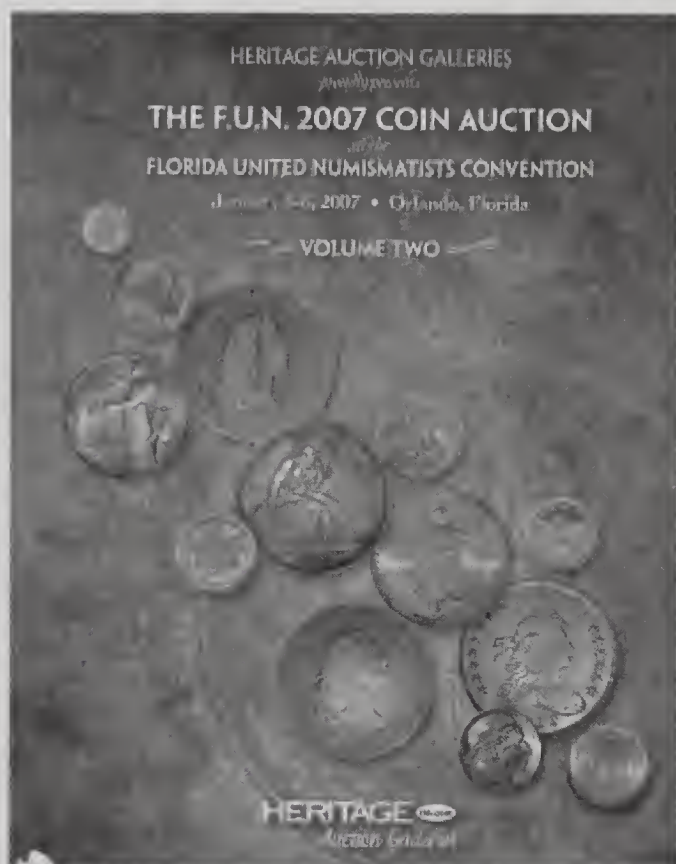
Nine examples of the popular and very rare (High R-6) 1798 B-5 Dollar are included in the 2007 Early Dollar Census. Shown here is a high grade example of the late die state. Almost all examples known show this massive reverse die crack. Only one example is known without this crack (Spies:47).



In the author's opinion, the 1799 B-22 die marriage is the most difficult of the 1799s to find in About Uncirculated condition. One of the reasons is that the obverse die appears to be a little "dull" looking, and the obverse detail is always weaker than it is on the reverse.

Reverse of an exceptional 1799 B-22 Dollar, with the neat horizontal break bisecting the reverse. Compare the detail and look of the reverse of this specimen to the obverse photo. The reverse appears more sharply struck and lustrous than the obverse, typical for the 1799 B-22 die marriage.





Heritage Auctions sold the William (Bill) Luebke Collection of early dollars in January 2007. Bill assembled 108 different die marriages before the collection was sold. Three of Bill's early dollars were prominently featured on the catalog cover, including a great 1795 Flowing Hair Dollar, Double Struck and with the BRINSMAID'S counterstamp on Liberty. Bill acquired this from the Jules Reiver collection sale. It now has a new home in another JRCS member's collection.

If you only had one coin in your early dollar collection (as one JRCS member has), why not make it a 1794 Dollar! Obverse of 1794 Dollar, ex. Chapman's sale of the Charles Gregory collection, June 1916:2423.



Reverse of the Gregory specimen 1794 Dollar. Four specimens of the 1794 Dollar are included in the 2007 early dollar census.



Friends, Memories and a 1796 Double Struck Dollar

By Fred Hagemeyer

One of the great things about collecting coins can be the hunt. Searching internet sites or walking coin shows with the thought of finding something unusual or even cherrying that rare variety can bring out the kid in the most mature of Numismatists. Another great thing is having friends to talk to that share your interests. This can be just as rewarding as finding that “great” coin. Of the many coins we add to our collections everyone seems to have a few favorite coins. They may not be the most expensive or the rarest coins, but maybe a coin that brings back a memory and puts a smile on their face when they look at it.

One day while enjoying the thrill of the hunt on Ebay, I stumbled onto a 1796 Bust Dollar captioned as “UNIQUE”. I had to take a closer look. Could it be the super rare B-3 or B-6? Sadly no, it was the common B-4. It was raw and low grade, but what made this coin unusual was that it was touted as “Double Struck”. Not much more in the way of a description. After careful scrutiny of the not so clear posted scans, I contacted a good friend and Bust Dollar enthusiast, Bill Luebke for his insight and valued opinion. In past years we talked quite often as he was building his early dollar collection, totaling 108 varieties. Quite a feat! He took a look at the pictures posted in the sale and we agreed that if it was a genuine double strike, it would be a very “Cool” coin. Alas there is always a catch. It is an “As Is” auction with no return privilege. I was so curious about the dollar; I had to put in a bid and hoped for the best. The auction ended, I won and immediately mailed out a check. Next began that long two weeks, waiting for the coin to arrive. And yes; at this point I did have a touch of buyer’s remorse.

Finally, the coin arrived. A nice original coin and certainly double struck. To my surprise, it came accompanied with a letter dated October 1995 from the late Jules Reiver, offering his description of the coin and stating that he felt the double strike to be of mint origin. As I read the letter, I recalled the many conversations I had with Jules, discussing bust dollar varieties. Some Great Memories.



I wanted to know more on the history of the coin, so I contacted the seller. He told me he had owned the coin since the early 1950's, having it slabbed in the 1980's by PCGS as an F-12 with no mention of the double strike on the holder. It was later broken out the holder so Jules could examine the coin better and to photograph it. The coin then went back into his collection raw until sold. After looking over the coin for a few weeks, I submitted it to NGC. They graded the coin VG-10...Mint Error...Double Struck First Strike 35% Off Center.



The first strike is 35% to the northeast about 1:30 on the obverse putting the date in the bust of the second strike which is a normal strike. Still readable from the first strike is the "96" of the date in the outline of the bust in the second strike and the back of Miss Liberty's head shows just left of the "E" in "Liberty". Her nose and chin are outlined at stars 9 and 10 respectively, and the end of the bust shows crossing the field to star 14 with the rim showing at star 15...

On the reverse the strike is 35% to the southeast about 4:30 still readable are the letters "TE" of states in the eagle's wing. "S" of states can be seen in the wreath and the rim shows strong between the "F" of "OF" and the "A" of "America" and the wreath from the first strike shows strong between "America" and the rim. Surprisingly there still is a lot of the off center first strike detail to be seen considering the low grade of the coin.



The 1805/4 “Wide Date” Half Dollar An Appreciation, Die Stage Analysis, and Register Part 1

Bryce W. Brown

Coins of the early United States Mint have fascinated generations of collectors and historians alike. Borne of the proud aspirations of a newly independent country and demand from commerce, these coins were the product of an inexperienced and ill-equipped fledgling mint. As the product of their labor was scattered throughout the United States and beyond, few could have known how cherished these coins would eventually become. Over 200 years later, I am among many who puzzle over the “why” and “how” and “when” questions that may never fully be answered.

When I first flipped through Al Overton’s “Early Half Dollar Die Varieties 1794-1836” in the early 1990’s, one die marriage caught my eye – the 1805/4 O.103. Known as the 1805/4 “wide date” when or before John Haseltine penned his “Type Table of United States Half Dollars” in 1881, this coin seemed to “have it all”: the first year overdate of the half dollar denomination; several die states including a spectacular shattered obverse die and a controversial late die state; the intrigue of scarcity with only a handful of specimens known - and all being in circulated condition; and finally, one of the most beautiful obverse and reverse designs of all United States coinage.

Immediately, many questions came to mind:

How many examples of this coin still exist? How many were minted?

Did the triangular obverse die flake really fall out completely as Overton described?

Why was it overdated? (Weren’t other early coins struck beyond the actual year date with no concern?)

When was this coin minted relative to 1803 and other 1805 half dollar coinage?

These and other questions (and the dearth of available information) sparked the desire to learn about one of the most charismatic and sought-after Draped Bust half dollar die varieties – the 1805/4 WIDE DATE.

Recent History of the 1805/4 Wide Date

The word “rare” is one of the most overused terms in the collectibles industry. Generally speaking, the relative demand for a collectible is greater when there are fewer available, and conversely, demand is diminished when more of a given item is available. This concept is not lost on collectibles dealers, who, in the eternal tug-of-war with prospective buyers use “rare”, “condition rarity”, and other appealing adjectives to market their wares.

So, how "rare" is the 1805/4 O.103 die marriage? Here's what some leading numismatist/dealers had to say in their own time:

- John Haseltine: "...excessively rare variety" (1881)
- M. L. Beistle: "...exceedingly rare" (1929)
- Wayte Raymond: "...the very rare variety with large 4 showing to left of 5." (1943)
- John Ford: "...of extreme rarity" (1957)
- Art Kagin: "...less than a dozen specimens in all said to exist." (1964)
- Don Taxay: "...Rarity 7, actually R6 if all three die states are reckoned. Most difficult to find in anything approaching nice condition." (1974)
- Walter Breen: "Very rare. Usually in low grades." (1988)
- Al Overton: In November of 1970, Al thought so highly of the 0.103 that the only bust half dollar he offered MORE money for in a published buy price list was the legendary 1817/14!
- Much more recently, in 2004, the Bust Half Nut Club estimated the 0.103 to be an R5+ coin (31-46 known, all die states combined).

Still intrigued, I conducted an extensive review of auction records, dealers' lists, and census data from the 1940's to the present to try to identify as many individual examples of the 1805/4 O.103 as I could. However, I first needed to gather information on the die states (stages) so I would know what I was looking at. For the purpose of this article, I will use the term STAGES, as not to conflict with Overton's die states.

Previously Published Die States & Possible Additional Die Stages

For the purpose of this article, I will concentrate solely on the obverse die stages. The reverse certainly does show several die cracks and various sharp clash marks, but these features do not change as markedly as the obverse features do throughout the life of the die.

The 1805/4 Wide Date exists in a wonderful progression of obverse die states. Al Overton basically described them as follows:

- O.103 (faint obverse die crack from nose extends upward to edge between Y and star 8)
- O.103a (obverse die crack described becomes heavier and extends from edge to nose and across bust to curls and splits to form a triangular break from a loosening flake on the die, from the edge below star 1, covering all of star 1 and 3/4 of star 2, and converging to an apex at the curls)
- O.103b (triangular obverse flake has now broken entirely out of the die, completely obliterating star 1 and all but two upper points of star 2)

The die stages can be further described as follows:

	Reported Die Stages	Haseline	Beistle	Overton	Overton	Overton/Parsley
		1881	1929	1967	1970	1990
I	Short, light crack from nose into field	-	B-2C	O-6	O-103	O-103
II	Die crack from nose thickens to a break, extending to edge between Y and star 8, with field to right of crack now higher than to left of crack	-	B-2aCa	O-7	O-103	O-103
III	Die crack on right side of obverse extends across portrait, left field, and crosses star 2 to edge	-	-	-	-	-
IV	Another crack from lower curls extends below star 1 to edge, forming a triangle with existing crack from curls through star 2 to edge	H-3	B-2bCa	O-8	O-103a	O-103a
V	Triangular cud-like broken section surface is significantly higher than the surrounding fields	H-3	B-2bCa	O-8	O-103a	O-103a
VI	Triangular die “flake” has now broken entirely out of the die, no trace of star 1 nor all but two upper points of star 2	-	-	O-9	O-103b	O-103b

Note 1: Die stage III has not been seen by this writer, the description is from Bowers & Merena (Walter Childs) 8/30/1999:337 (not illustrated).

Note 2: At some point between die stages II and V, there appears a tiny pointed clash mark at the junction of Miss Liberty’s jawline and neckline. More study is needed to determine when this originated.

Note 3: Die stage VI (103b) may not exist as described by Overton (i.e. triangular “flake” completely missing from die). It is likely that such a coin would have little or no reverse detail opposite the “broken out” triangular section. The coin would also have a significant “wave” or “bend” at the edge at the triangular break area, when viewed on edge, due to the completely “unsupported” strike. I was unable to confirm such a wave in correspondence with owners of “103b” coins. For those of you with a 1806 O-111a LDS coin, which has one or two shallow cuds (much smaller in width and depth than the triangular break on the 103b), observe the significant “wave” on the coin’s edge resulting from one side being completely unsupported when struck. Finally, I have viewed two high-grade coins in which the triangular section is significantly raised, where the triangular “retained cud” surface/field around stars 1 and 2 is now at the level of the top of the other stars (die stage V). Stars 1 and

2 on these coins are SO prominent that it is likely that they would be completely worn away by the time the coin wore to fine condition. Typical 103b coins show weak (but not missing) reverse detail, consistent with the 103b plated in Overton/Parsley. It should also be noted that I have not examined the Overton/Parsley “103b” coin in person. This is an interesting issue, in that once a variety or die stage is theorized and published, its existence can never be DIS-proven. (Probably the best example of this being Haseltine’s 1881 brief “type table” description of 1795 #30 – which is now known as the 1795 O.118... dutifully carried through the years (unverified but still published) by Beistle, Overton, and Parsley.)

Register of 1805/4 Wide Date Draped Bust Half Dollars

However many die states or stages one wishes to recognize, one descriptive characteristic stands out: the absence or presence of the obverse “triangular break”. Even the briefest auction or price list description will make note of this bold feature if it is present. Therefore, I have divided the register into two groups representing “early” and “later” die stages:

- 1) Early = Die stages prior to the appearance of the obverse triangular break (stages I-III); and
- 2) Later = Die stages including the obverse triangular break (stages IV-VI)

This allows inclusion of auction records that do not include a photograph, but DO contain enough information to place in either “early” or “later” group. It should also be noted that some literature illustrations are poor, and it is often difficult to discern the difference between die stage I & II pieces, and between die stage IV & V pieces. Therefore, the listed die stage is the author’s best attempt, given the available data.

The register, which comprises Appendix A, presents discrete examples of the 1805/4 Wide Date, roughly ordered by grade (remaining detail) based on available photographic records. Any damage is not taken into account. This is not intended to suggest a “condition census”, as such analysis would require appropriate in-hand comparison. The grade order is the author’s best attempt, given the available data. Following each section of the register is a list of “unmatched” appearances. These are typically records that did not include photographs and could not be conclusively matched with any of the preceding examples. However, it is believed that over two thirds of these currently unmatched coins will eventually be shown to be among the examples in the main lists. I invite any information that the reader can share.

Brief Conclusions

After reviewing the registry data, I believe the most significant data group is the “unmatched” example group – which can potentially skew the “verified” population significantly. I have reviewed the “unmatched” appearances, and believe that many will eventually be shown to match the “verified” examples (or just fade away). This table summarizes my thoughts:

The 1805/4 "Wide Date" Half Dollar

Die Stage	"Verified" Examples	"Unmatched" Examples	Probable Duplicates Among "Unmatched"	Estimated Total
Early Die Stages I-III	10	8	(5)	13
Later Die Stages IV-VI	20	14	(11)	23
Totals >	30	22	(16)	36

There are certainly additional examples "out there" that are in long-term collections or are waiting to be "found" in someone's attic or jewelry box. I estimate that there could be as many as 47-52 total discrete examples verified (including the estimated 36 from above) as the next 20-30 years elapse. In any case, I'd say the BHNC's current estimate of R5+ (31-46 examples known) is right on the money.

One interesting data sample of sorts is "eBay". The online auction service, which has become a public clearinghouse of sorts, has flushed a variety of previously unknown coins into the coin market, including two previously unknown draped bust die marriages (1806 O.129 & 1807 O.115). Other scarce previously untracked coins have included 1795 O.114 & O.127 and 1806 O.122 & O.127. Some believe that the eBay market can be used to gauge relative rarity of items because so many of the sellers basically sell what they have available – regardless of rarity. Over time, trends can be recognized. In discussions with several knowledgeable eBay savvy collectors, we have never seen an unattributed or "new" 1805/4 Wide Date offered on eBay. Whether or not you think eBay reflects relative rarity, the absence of a previously unknown Wide Date showing up on eBay over a period of over 10 years suggests that there is a minimal population "out there" waiting to show up.

Why are more late die stage examples known? I think that fewer of the late die stage coins were struck than early, but the surviving population percentage is much higher due to the oddity of the bold triangular die crack – it was saved more often as a novelty or error.

It should be noted that the grade distribution of the surviving Wide Date examples was not addressed here.

Beyond the 1805/4 Wide Date half dollar, there are tantalizing clues that link die use and production of 1803-1805 half dollars and 1803-1804 gold eagles. Emission order of 1805-1806 half dollar coinage remains an intriguing study.

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REGISTER OF 1805/4 WIDE DATE HALF DOLLARS, DIE STAGES I-III (EARLY)

(All die stages prior to Overton's O.103a)

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Revision 11/25/2006

<u>Example Number</u>	<u>Die Stage</u>	<u>Overton Equiv.</u>	<u>Stated Grade</u>	<u>Grade or Identification Key Comments</u>	<u>Sale Date</u>	<u>Source</u>	<u>Auction</u>	(NP) = No Plate/Photo	<u>Price / Realized</u>	<u>Additional Comments</u>
E1	1	103	PCGS-55	"lustrous, especially on reverse, small nick over Liberty's temple"	Jun 1 2001	Heritage	Long Beach	8349	12650	
			PCGS-55		Aug 2001	Alpine Numismatics	FPL	---	17000	
			PCGS-55		Jul 31 2003	B+M	ANA-Baltimore	1391	23000	
			PCGS-55		Jul 8 2004	B+M	Baltimore	602	12363	
			PCGS-55	Obv: dark spot under 1, short diag cut behind eyebrow, short scr betw bow & S4, dark toning around stars/etc (poss dipped); Rev: dark spot left of ME, dk spot under arrow feathers	Feb 23 2005	Heritage	Long Beach	6923	13800	
E2	1	103	VF/EF	Rev: sm diag cut in crossbars over 2nd shield stripe, diag mark on 2nd cloud, vert mark betw S2 and OF; "light irregular scratch, 1 mm long, in field before chin"	Apr 30 1976	Rarcoa	CSNS	245	350	
E3	2	103+	35	Obv: weak obv dentils 9-20°c, full strong crack from nose to S8, dark spot in field between brow and S8; Rev: dark spot betw left wing and 1st cloud, both sides have perimeter toning	Mar 22 2002	B+M	Rich	2379	3680	

Example Number	Die Stage	Overton Equiv.	Stated Grade	Grade or Identification Key-Comments	Sale Date	Source	Auction	Lot	Price / Realized	Additional Comments
E4	1	103	VF	"strictly VF"; two short horizontal marks midway between chin & S12	Jun 13 1957	NewNeth	#49	1198	52.50	
			VF		Dec 6, 1974	Forman, Taxay, and Associates	Philadelphia	150	?	
			CHVF	"VF and choice, steel and iridescent"	Dec 3 1977	Stack's	US Coins	698	650	
E5	1	103	about Fine	(no comments)	Dec 9 1992	Sotheby's	New York	428(NP) (group lot)	2750 (group lot)	Downey sold to Robinson Brown 12/1992 after purchasing from Sotheby's
			20	"PQ, original, no marks worth mention"; Obv: dark rim mark betw R & T; several dark marks on center of drapery; Rev: dark mks on clouds 3 & 4, dark spot at top of last cloud	Apr 29 1995	Downey	MBS #14	10	3660	(poor photo); R. Brown sold here
E6	1	103	VF	"edge bump above S6"; Obv: second edge bump under 5, thin ser from eye to cheek (this possibly photo lint)	Jun 10 1980	B+R	Rochester	3212	1400	from the University of Rochester Collection, possibly from Adelbert Pierson Little (d1921)
			-	"Breen #4575"	(publ. 1988)	-	-	-	-	plate coin in Breen's Encyclopedia of US and Colonial Coins, page 378
E7	1	103	PCGS-15	Obv: rim ding at S3; Rev: sm scratch between left wing feather (3rd from top) and edge	Mar 2 2005	(private treaty)	---	---	n/a	
E8	1	103	15	"bordering on VF"; Obv: weak LIBERTY; Rev: tiny cut at edge below A3, another just above top leaves below end of scroll	May 29 1987	Kagin's	SanDiego	1342	1375	

Example Number	Die Stage	Overton Equiv.	Stated Grade	Grade or Identification Key Comments	Sale Date	Source	Auction	Lot	Price / Realized	Additional Comments
E9	1	103	F	Downey graded Fine; curved gouge in field directly above the 8 in date; rim ding above O in OF; two tiny hits in dentils above E and between TA in STATES; two rim hits at UN and TE of UNITED (the one at TE is the largest of the reverse hits); tiny round ding/pit near edge below right claws; attractive dark toning	May 2005	Downey	-	-	n/a	Downey offered at Central States show. Later sold to current owner.
E10	2	103	8	"a few fine sers obv"; Obv: many diag sers betw face and stars, long diag scr from bust to top of bow, sin rim hit between S2 & S3	Jun 5 1988	Superior	Blevins	3073	688	Blevins 3073, Downey #16 & #18 are the same coin according to current owner, who has all original flips - photos are not a clear match
		103+	10	Obv: appears to have heavy crack from nose to S8	Jan 21 1996	Downey	MBS #16	13	1271	(poor photo); Schertz bought here.
			10		Aug 21 1996	Downey	MBS #18	55	1150	(poor photo)

Currently Unmatched "Early" Die Stage Appearances - many or most of these may be the same as those listed above, but not proven as of 11/25/2006

Example Number	Die Stage	Overton Equiv.	Stated Grade	Grade or Identification Key Comments	Sale Date	Source	Auction	Lot	Price / Realized	Additional Comments
UME-1	?	EDS?	VF	"large 4 showing to left of 5"	Jan 27 1943	Morgenthau	Sale #447	261(NP)	?	
UME-2	?	(EDS)	VF-	B-2C; "just about VF, 3-4 known by Kagin"	Apr 27 1962	Stack's	Cox	1764(NP)	425	Cox purchased from the Kagin brothers for \$730

<u>Example Number</u>	<u>Die Stage</u>	<u>Overton Equiv.</u>	<u>Stated Grade</u>	<u>Grade or Identification Key Comments</u>	<u>Sale Date</u>	<u>Source</u>	<u>Auction</u>	<u>Lot</u>	<u>Price / Realized</u>	<u>Additional Comments</u>
UME-3	?	(EDS)	EF	"no diebreak die failure at E in LIBERTY"; Beistle 2C	Jun 30 1966	Kagin's	#264	234(NP)	?	
UME-4	2	103+	15	"Parsley called VF; break from nose to S8"	Jul 30 1993	Downey'	MBS #9	94(NP)	WD	possibly now in Overton "mid-west" collection; Parsley originally purchased via private treaty for \$2100 after Overton's passing
UME-5	3	103++	25	"a few faint marks; obv cr from rim through S2, across field to hair, across portrait to edge betw Y & S8; medium gray with golden iridescence on both sides"	Aug 30 1999	B+M	Childs	337(NP)	1840	Collection was formed in the 1800's, added to in the mid 1900's, and completed from 1960-1991 with the assistance of Ken & Phil Bressett
UME-6	1	103	Ch F	"no marks"	(Jan 2001)	(Heritage)	(FPL)	---	?	this example is strongly suspected to be #E8 (Kagin's 1987); good photo not available
UME-7	?	103	VG 10/8	"lightly cleaned"	Feb 2004	Dick Osburn	(FPL)	(NP)	1950	
UME-8	?	103	?	"103"				---		Charlton Meyer collection as of ~late 2004; from Don Frederick, 1978

REGISTER OF 1805/4 WIDE DATE HALF DOLLARS, DIE STAGES IV-VI (LATER)

<u>Example Number</u>	<u>Die Stage</u>	<u>Overton Equiv.</u>	<u>Stated Grade</u>	<u>Grade Comments</u>	<u>Sale Date</u>	<u>Source</u>	<u>Auction</u>	<u>Lot</u>	<u>Price / Realized</u>	<u>Additional Comments</u>
(All die stages including/ following Overton's O.103a)					© 2006 by Bryce Brown			Revision 11/25/2006		
L1	4	103a	EF	"EF and lustrous"; Obv: early stage triangular break	Dec 12 1970	Stack's	Alto	793	320	
			AU	Parsley plate coin (103a); Parsley carried in census as AU-50	(publ. 1990)	-	-	-	-	Parsley 1990 plate coin (103a); according to Downey 3/2005, coin was sold in 1993 through him (although not in MBS#9). Coin originally in Overton collection, inherited by Parsley.
L2	5	103a+	VF	Obv: heavy triangular break; "plate coin in the Guidebook"	Apr 27 1962	Stack's	Cox	1765(NP)	400	Cox purchased from the Kagin brothers for \$680

<u>Example Number</u>	<u>Die Stage</u>	<u>Overton Equiv.</u>	<u>Stated Grade</u>	<u>Grade or Identification Key-Comments</u>	<u>Sale Date</u>	<u>Source</u>	<u>Auction</u>	<u>Lot</u>	<u>Price / Realized</u>	<u>Additional Comments</u>
			-		(publ. 1962)		-	-	-	Obverse & reverse are plated in "The Fantastic 1804 Dollar", page 40. However, the "enlarged" plate of the date in the same book IS NOT this coin. The coin used for the enlarged photograph is not currently identified.
			VF	Beistle 2bCa	Jun 17 1963	Kreisberg	MBS	1093(NP)	?	"purchased previously for \$400"
			VF	Beistle 2bCa	Nov 25 1963	Kreisberg	MBS	859(NP)	?	
			VF	Beistle 2bCa	Mar 19 1964	Kreisberg-Schulman	Brand-Lichtenfels	1291(NP)	165	
			40	Obv: heavy triangular break	Jan 9 1992	B+M	Brilliant	51	3520	Brilliant had obtained this from Downey at the 1988 Cincinnati ANA
			35	Obv: VLDS (now dipped), digs below E and above Y, dk spot middle of neck, spot above inner point of S11; Rev: poss lump between R and I of AMERICA	Feb 6 1993	Downey	MBS #8	8	4473	(note: obverse of this coin was also plated in older "Redbooks", at least 1962-1971)
L3	5+	103a++	virtually UNC	"shattered die, much luster"	Mar 5 1964	Kagin's	#250	27	1700	"valued at \$2500"
			virtually UNC	"shattered die, much luster"	Jan 12 1967	Kagin's	#268	490	2600	(from Kagin's 3/05/1964 sale) "from a March 1964 sale where it was valued at \$2500"

<u>Example Number</u>	<u>Die Stage</u>	<u>Overton Equiv.</u>	<u>Stated Grade</u>	<u>Grade or Identification Key Comments</u>	<u>Sale Date</u>	<u>Source</u>	<u>Auction</u>	<u>Lot</u>	<u>Price / Realized</u>	<u>Additional Comments</u>
			virtually UNC	from "consignment Georgia"	Sep 11 1972	Kagin's	#298	86	2250	Acquired in 1964 as "rare cracked die, best known?" for \$1700 (ed: probably Overton, since several preturbs traced to Overton/Parsley were sold in same Sep 1981 in same Sep 1981 Kagin's sale, below)
			50/55	Obv: raised triangular break, dig on Adam's apple, tooling under Y; Rev: rim ding over T2	Sep 27 1981	Kagin's	#325	846	7875	"ex Kagin's 9/72 sale" (later sold to Schertz at the 1985 FUN show by a NY dealer as an AU for \$5000+)
			45	"tooled below Y on obv"	Jul 1999	Downey	FPL	Part 1	2500	purchased by Zornes
			EF	(now ANACS EF details, Net-12) "triangular die break portion is shraply raised"; dipped	Apr 28 2000	eBay	R.Zornes	-	3500+	from Zornes to current owner (but possibly through intermediary)
L.4	4	103a	25	(now NGC-35), "original, problem-free, no marks worth mention"; Obv: probable rim ding betw T & Y	Apr 8 1998	Downey	MBS #21	138	3999	slabbed after sale as NGC-35 by current owner; had been "recently uncovered in central PA"
L.5	5	103a+	CHVF30		Apr 30 1982	B+R	Nelson	410b	(part of \$8000 group lot)	
				five small scattered hits in right obverse field	Jan 27 2006	Heritage	Jules Reiver	22527	7475	"Ex Julian Leidman 5/1982" (5/06/82); Reiver considered this an 103b in EF40 condition

<u>Example Number</u>	<u>Die Stage</u>	<u>Overton Equiv.</u>	<u>Stated Grade</u>	<u>Grade or Identification Key Comments</u>	<u>Sale Date</u>	<u>Source</u>	<u>Auction</u>	<u>Lot</u>	<u>Price / Realized</u>	<u>Additional Comments</u>
L6		103a	PCGS-30	"subtle gray toning both sides, large triangular die break"	Sep 17 1997	Stack's	Remick	812(NP)	2970	
		103a	PCGS-30	"soft brownish gray toning over both surfaces; weakly struck at LIBERTY and along the bottom portion from 4-8 o'clock on reverse"	Aug 3 1998	B+M	Rarities	184	not sold	
		103a	ICG-35	Complete FPL description: "problem free with brownish gray tone"	Aug 2003	AlpineNumismatics	FPL	-	3750	
	4	103a	ICG-35	"Even, brownish gray tone. Mark free surfaces"	Aug 2006	AlpineNumismatics	FPL	-	5500	
L7	5	103a+	25	Obv: heavy raised break, poss rim ding above E, two dark spots in far left drapery, dark spot under 0 in date	Dec 1 1994	Stack's	Merkin	876	2860	
L8	4	103a	20	"PQ, original"; Obv: dark spot under inner point of S11, dk spot under ear; Rev: dk spot under star under beak, dk spot under U of UNUM	Jun 3 2003	Downey	MBS #28	188	3670	Brian Greer to BHNC member in 1999, consigned here, then on to Mark Emtman, Jim O'Donnell, to B+M twice (see following)
			NGC-25		Jul 8 2004	B+M	Baltimore	603	not sold	
			NGC-25		Jan 9 2005	B+M	Rarities	526	not sold	
			NGC-25		Mar 2005	DickOsborn	FPL	---	5900	
L9	5	103a+	20	"It graffiti in obv fields - 'John Deutch'"; Obv: raised break; Rev: dk spot between O in OF and edge	May 31 1992	Superior	Pugh	739	523	had been purchased from Jonathan Kern in 1987
L10	5	103a+	15/12	"VF details in areas, heavy retained triangular cud"; Obv: minor pin scratches; Rev: depression at edge under U of UNITED"	Oct 1 1998	Downey	MBS #22	204	771	(poor photo)

<u>Example Number</u>	<u>Die Stage</u>	<u>Overton Equiv.</u>	<u>Stated Grade</u>	<u>Grade or Identification Key Comments</u>	<u>Sale Date</u>	<u>Source</u>	<u>Auction</u>	<u>Lot</u>	<u>Price / Realized</u>	<u>Additional Comments</u>
L11	5+	103a++	F+	Obv: heavy raised break, scratch from lips to S11 with dark spot in center; Rev: very weak edge from tail through UN (the cut on upper left shield is a photographic print defect, not a defect on the coin)	Feb 5 1976	Stack's	Tad	541	600	
					Apr 30 1982	B+R	Nelson	410c	(part of \$8000 group lot)	
L12	5	103a+	8	"recent marks reverse from 1 in UNITED to eagle's breast"; Obv: dark spot near center of triangular break, mark in front of lips 1/3 way to S10, mark in field close to neck	May 27 1990	Superior	Willasch	43	2420	
			12	choice fine; "narrow band of hairlines from 1 in UNITED through the right wing"	Jan 24 1995	Downey	MBS #13	8	1771	current owner purchased from Downey in 8/2004
L13	5	103a+	12	"obv scratches, edges a bit tattered"; Obv: sharp vert scratch from edge thru E to head, others cross face and right obv field, especially at S8,9,10; Rev: short mark/scratch through lower part of C to 4th berry	Sep 10 1987	Stack's	Ruder	11139	770	
L14	5	103a+	VG	(F details); Obv: 2 deep punch marks obv - first on mouth, second on neck, horiz scr betw bow and triangular break; Rev: resulting lumps from obverse damage in and above rt wing	Jun 5 1988	Superior	Blevins	3074	286	L. Briggs purchased at this sale

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L15	"6"	103b	about F	"about Fine, lightly cleaned"; light vertical scratch crosses last A of AMERICA and extends into the right wing, small dig between the tips of feathers 3 & 4 from the left side of the shield, small dig in field inside I of UNITED	May 24 2006	Stack's	May	1750	5290	
L16	5	103a+	F	Obv: sharp dig just above head below R, sharp cut in lower curls just above I in date; Rev: diag cut across 4th stripe, cuts on two stars	(publ. 1970)	-	-	-	-	Overton 1970 plate coin (103a)
			VG	"triangular break, some letters of LIBERTY not completely full, balanced wear"	Sep 27 1981	Kagin's	#325	847(NP)	577.50	current owner purchased at this sale; likely consigned by Parsley along with several other tracked/plate coins (ex.Overton)
L17	5	103a+	4	VG; Obv: two horiz cuts in hair below bow, pin scrs in obv field; Rev: light scratch from I in AMERICA to tail	Oct 1 1989	Superior	Munson	444	1100	
L18	5	103a+	-	(plated in O'67 on p36 as O-8)	(p1967)	-	-	-	-	one of the Overton 1967 plate coins (O-8, p36)
			G	(plated in O'67)	Jul 27 1985	Stack's	Auction '85	1703	715	
			7	(now dipped); Obv: dark mark at jaw; Rev: dark stain in field between arrowheads and scroll	May 31 1992	Superior	Pugh	740	853	according to a BHNC member, this coin was Elton Dosier's, then consigned to Downey after Dosier's passing, whereabouts now unknown (5/2005)

<u>Example Number</u>	<u>Die Stage</u>	<u>Overton Equiv.</u>	<u>Stated Grade</u>	<u>Grade or Identification Key Comments</u>	<u>Sale Date</u>	<u>Source</u>	<u>Auction</u>	<u>Lot</u>	<u>Price / Realized</u>	<u>Additional Comments</u>
L19	"6"	103b	G+	LDS, heavy die breaks and worn - Overton plated in all editions as 103b	(p '67, '70, '90)	-	-	-	-	Overton '67, '70, '90 plate coin (103b); according to Parsley in 3/2005, coin was sold in 1993 through Downey
L20	"6"	103b	AG	no definition to portions of stars 1+2; large break from the nose; appears as "B", but edge of coin is NOT displaced (excessively warped/wavy)	?	-	-	-	n/a	purchased unattributed at Stack's retail store long ago

Currently Unmatched "Later" Die Stage Appearances - many or most of these may be the same as those listed above, but not proven as of 11/25/2006

UMIL-1	?	103a+?	G	(likely undergraded by today's standards)	Nov 1881	Haseltine	(Auction)	?	?	
UMIL-2	4?	103a	F	"triangular obverse crack"	Oct 18 1940	Stack's	A.C. Gies	426(NP)	?	
UMIL-3	5?	103a+	F	"with heavier die break"	Oct 18 1940	Stack's	A.C. Gies	427(NP)	?	
UMIL-4	5+?	103a++	VG	"shattered obverse, die showing the cracked die distinctly"	Oct 18 1940	Stack's	A.C. Gies	428(NP)	?	
UMIL-5	?	103a	VG		Oct 24 1942	Kosoff	Auction 18	449(NP)	?	

Example Number	Die Stage	Overton Equiv.	Stated Grade	Grade or Identification Key-Comments	Sale Date	Source	Auction	Lot	Price / Realized	Additional Comments
UML-6	5	103a+	F	"struck from cracked die"	Jan 26 1957	Kreisberg-Schulman	Menjou	2307(NP)	21	
										<p>Important note: New Netherlands wrote in this lot description "ex. Menjou (Kosoff-Kreisberg, 1950) lot 2307, ex. Pittsburgh's Manning collection, possibly the original Haselinc piece, as the descriptions are near enough"; - However, N.N. got their Menjou sales confused: this 1805/4 O.103 piece came out of the Kreisberg-Schulman Menjou sale of 1957, while the 1805/4 O.101 from the Kosoff-Kreisberg Menjou sale of 1950 went into the J.J. Pittman collection, and was later sold as lot #1445 in Akers' May 1998 Pittman sale. New Netherlands inadvertently did us the favor of identifying an underattributed 1805/4 from the 1957 Menjou sale as an O.103, while also adding the Manning provenance to the Pittman 1805/4 O.101 (you read it here first). Quite probably #L4, above.</p>
			VF	"shattered dies, small and faint "X" near 7th star, and a rim nick or so, bold broken die"	Dec 11 1963	NewNeth	#57	775(NP)	175	
UML-7	5+?	?	F-VF	B 2bCa; "massive obverse die break"	Jan 1966	Roy Pohler	Numismatic Scrapbook classified ad	pg.57(NP)	245	
UML-8	"6"?	?	F+	"strong Fine"; "Overton-9 (O.103b)"	~1969	Coronet	Gentleman's Study Collection	332(NP)	165	
UML-9	?	103a	ChF	"nearly VF, pie shaped break"	Mar 12 1975	Stack's	Garrett	185	750	
UML-10	?	103a	F	"a gouge in the obverse field"	Jul 29 1984	Krueger	ANA	1635	?	



<u>Example Number</u>	<u>Die Stage</u>	<u>Overton Equiv.</u>	<u>Stated Grade</u>	<u>Grade or Identification Key Comments</u>	<u>Sale Date</u>	<u>Source</u>	<u>Auction</u>	<u>Lot</u>	<u>Price / Realized</u>	<u>Additional Comments</u>
UML-11	?	103a	ANACS Net-12	(ANACS ? Details, Net-12, Graffiti); “The obverse fields show initials cut into them. Dark gray patina with silver highpoints.”	Feb 13 1998	Heritage	Bullet - Long Beach	271(NP)	198	Questionable attribution due to low price realized. If indeed a 103, this is quite probably #L9, above.
UML-12	5?	103a+	20/15	“VF obv, shattered die, weak motto and left wing, comparable to ‘70 plate coin, no problems”	Oet 30 1990	Downey	MBS #3	2(NP)	not sold	(\$3000 reserve, offered post-sale for \$3150); “once sold as “finest known” by a Denver firm”
UML-13	?	103a	?	“103a”				---		Charlton Meyer collection as of ~late 2004; from Parsley, ex. Overton, July 1989
UML-14	?	103b	?	“103b”				---		Charlton Meyer collection as of ~late 2004; from Mike Summers, Nov 2001

1814 Bust Halves: Mission Accomplished

Mike Preston

Some years ago, after having purchased a number of Bust Halves because they are, in Stu Keen's language, "neat coins," I published a query in the **John Reich Journal**. In it I asked the journal's readership for advice, considering my limited budget, about which would be the best year in which to specialize. I asked, in short, how to get one's feet wet without taking a bath. I received several excellent suggestions, and I settled on the year 1814. I determined to buy the highest quality of coins I could afford--generally AU's, but oftentimes XF's and rarely MS-60's. I wanted to be able to see the differences between one coin and another rather than to squint and pretend.

I write this because my experience may be useful for those who like the coins but don't want to dabble and yet can't compete with those who are truly affluent. I thank Stu Keen here, and others, for being patient with me when I needed to support my daughters in college rather than purchase Bust Halves. (Our older daughter married recently and is a graduate student at Northwestern University.) My point is that one can achieve limited goals which are personally rewarding while on a budget.

In short, I now have coins produced by all of the die-marriages for 1814, and I am attempting to acquire coins which reflect the different die-states. I recently acquired an 1814 O-101 (without the die-break through the date). Because dies do not "break" all at once, I am amassing examples of 1814 O-108 and O-108a (the E/A in STATES variety) in order to study their variation. Such a specific collecting effort forces one to study the Overton/Parsley books as well as one's own coins and those of others in order to understand why, for example, Parsley recently redefined the O-101 so narrowly, thereby making it a R.6 and the O-101a R2.

At the outset I intended to limit my general collecting to 1807-1820, something that Stu Keen correctly said I would not stick to. I have gradually acquired the later dates while waiting for 1814 varieties to become available. I now lack just 1833 and 1835. In this expanded effort I have stuck with seeking the highest highest quality of coins I can afford, but I've also looked for coins that are otherwise interesting--overdates, double profiles, relatively rare R-4's and R-5's, etc. Thus my growing date-set is not just a plug-the-hole kind of effort, but rather an accumulation of illustrative examples of the variation of Bust Halves.

I've also become interested in contemporary counterfeits, not that this is a major interest, but rather to see for myself what they were and to get a better idea of how the general public understood Bust Halves. Of interest to me is how often counterfeits are well worn, suggesting that much of the public lacked of experience with authentic Bust Halves.

Recently Brad Karoleff published a column in *Coin World* in which he suggested 1813 as a "difficult, yet achievable" year. That, of course, is as practical a date to collect as 1814. I remain quite happy with 1814, in part because of what went on in that year and shortly after. Johnny Horton's song, "The Battle of New Orleans," begins: "In 1814 we took a little trip, along with Andrew Jackson down the mighty Mississipp." That was an important year in our country's early history. It was also an important time for my father's family which had migrated from Virginia to Kentucky in 1804 and was establishing itself there in those years following the Revolutionary War.



Freshmen Class of 2007

Welcome to the Fraternity



1806 Overton-130 Obverse



1806 Overton-130 Reverse

Photos courtesy of Heritage Auction Galleries



1835 LM-12 Obverse



1835 LM-12 Reverse

Photos courtesy of Edgar Souders



1817/4 Overton-102 Obverse



1817/4 Overton-102 Reverse

Photos courtesy of Independant Coin Grading Company

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| c ____ Capped Bust Half Dimes | j ____ Draped Bust Half Dollars |
| d ____ Draped Bust Small Eagle Dimes | k ____ Capped Bust Half Dollars |
| e ____ Draped Bust Heraldic Eagle Dimes | l ____ Flowing Hair Bust Dollars |
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